IMMANENCE

A BOOK OF VERSES

BY

EVELYN UNDERHILL



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IMMANENCE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE GREY WORLD

THE LOST WORD

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THE MIRACLES OF OUR LADY SAINT MARY

MYSTICISM: A study in the nature and development of man's spiritual consciousness

THE MYSTIC WAY

THEOPHANIES: A Book of Verses

PRACTICAL MYSTICISM: A Little Book for Normal People

JACOPERE DA TODI: A Spiritual Biography

THE ESSENTIALS OF MYSTICISM

IMMANENCE

A BOOK OF VERSES

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EVELYN UNDERHILL



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TO

MY FATHER

WITH MUCH LOVE

1353572

NOTE

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IMMANENCE

I come in the little things,
Saith the Lord :
Not borne on morning wings
Of majesty, but I have set My Feet
Amidst the delicate and bladed wheat
That springs triumphant in the furrowed sod.
There do I dwell, in weakness and in power ;
Not broken or divided, saith our God !
In your strait garden plot I come to flower :
About your porch My Vine
Meek, fruitful, doth entwine ;
Waits, at the threshold, Love's appointed hour.

I come in the little things,
Saith the Lord :
Yea ! on the glancing wings
Of eager birds, the softly pattering feet
Of furred and gentle beasts, I come to meet
Your hard and wayward heart. In brown bright eyes
That peep from out the brake, I stand confest.
On every nest
Where feathery Patience is content to brood
And leaves her pleasure for the high emprize
Of motherhood—
There doth My Godhead rest.

I come in the little things,
Saith the Lord :
My starry wings
I do forsake,
Love's highway of humility to take :
Meekly I fit my stature to your need.
In beggar's part
About your gates I shall not cease to plead—
As man, to speak with man—
Till by such art
I shall achieve My Immemorial Plan,
Pass the low lintel of the human heart.

INTROVERSION

What do you seek within, O Soul, my Brother ?
What do you seek within ?
I seek a Life that shall never die,
Some haven to win
From mortality.

What do you find within, O Soul, my Brother ?
What do you find within ?
I find great quiet where no noises come.
Without, the world's din :.
Silence in my home.

Whom do you find within, O Soul, my Brother ?
Whom do you find within ?
I find a friend that in secret came :
His scarred hands within
He shields a faint flame.

What would you do within, O Soul, my Brother ?
What would you do within ?
Bar door and window that none may see :
That alone we may be
(Alone ! face to face,
In that flame-lit place !)
When first we begin
To speak one with another.

CELESTIAL BEAUTY

Shy Heavenly Beauty peeps
The parted leaves between :
Hardly she may be seen,
So carefully her maidenhead she keeps.
The bold and roving eyes
That only seek for loveliness adorned,—
These, like a prudent maid,
She must evade.
'Tis for the wise
And gentle watcher, who upon the scorned
And common things of life delights to gaze
She keeps that magic moment of amaze,
When from her private lair
Sudden she does her plenitude declare ;
And quick and wild
As a vehement child,
Enticed whilst still unsought, resigns her charms,
Nothing reserving, to her lover's arms.

Ah, beyond lot of men most fortunate,
Who takes shy Heavenly Beauty for his mate !
To him she whispers witch-like, " Dear one, come !
All earth shall be our home.
Come, come with me !
Where little living simple things you see,

There wells the primal fountain of our joy :
The furry bee,
The petalled meek delight
That folds the flower's dear secret from the sight,
New bracken-tips tight curled,
The radiance and the rain
Dappling with mystery the homely plain,
Clouds strangely white,
And all the accidents that wait on changeful light
To veil the substance of the shrouded world,—
These be our love's employ !

" Yea, and not these alone ;
My touch from every stone
Shall strike strange fires, my breath on every rod
Shall make it burgeon with the life of God.
Even in the city streets
I shall declare my sharp intolerable sweets,
For all
The myriad shades and shapes of things are mine :
Where in the lamplight sepia pavements shine,
And the blue naphtha flames upon the stall,
Thence do I call
My lonely secret loud,
And weave my dread enchantments o'er the unseeing
crowd."

Not only so :
But in the inexorable hour of woe

When the soul's self would faint,
With horror made most horribly acquaint,
Still at her lover's side shall Heavenly Beauty go.
In terror's last distress
When mortal loveliness
With dying life itself is seen to die,
When from the teeming earth ignoble mouths appear
To feed on that we worshipped : then, " My dear,
Be not afraid," she cries, " for *here* am I !
This darkness doth but hide
The intimate fair being of thy bride.
Yea, I am here !
With vile corruption's self I dare to stand,
And take my marriage-crown from out Death's hand.

" Stern was my schooling in high steadfastness :
The faithful consort of the Only Fair,
I in his footsteps went
Where none but Beauty and her God might dare.
I was the angel of Gethsemane :
Men say his comrades slept,
But I was there,
The altar of that agony to dress.
Mine was the art that spread
The starry tent
Above his royal head,
And mine the sigh that passed
Across the shuddering olives when he wept.

I ran before Veronica to cast
My cloths about his face, and took to me
The sharp and ineffaceable impress
Of Deity.

" Mine was the comfort, mine the mystic cup,
'Twas my twin-brother Pain outpoured the wine:
Our mutual care his crown
Did cunningly entwine
With branches from my secret rose-bush torn—
Earth's blossoming thorn
Of thwarted but unconquered loveliness,
The brows of my beloved to adorn.
Where Life was first struck down
Beneath the Tree,
There was I lifted up,
The hierophant of Life new-made to be.
I rent the veil; I thrust the eager lance
Straight to the living heart of all romance.

" Then swam the earth in darkness; I was seen
Of none
Since the world's light was gone.
Yet, in that dreadful night of utmost gloom
I kept my lonely watch before the nest
Men called a tomb,
Which I had builded for my darling's rest.
Mists were upon the garden; as the dawn
Lit the world's edge, it rose from tearful sleep
As if a shroud about its grief to keep

Against the prying eyes of the swift-pacing morn.
Mists were upon the garden ! but between
The dew-drenched veils of Paradisal green
I saw the shape of One
Who moved soft-foot the living turf upon
With intimate quiet gesture of a friend.
'Behold !' I said
'The Gardener returns his little plants to tend.'
But, when he turned his head,
I knew that unto me was his desire ;
Yea ! as a sword of fire
Was Life within his hand, all ugliness to slay
That we might rule together o'er the transfigured day.

"Then I, that am chosen bride
Of the Eternal Wisdom, leapt from my lover's side
On wings of joy, his conquest to prepare.
I coursed the far world wide ;
In the deaf ears of men I cried, 'Beware !
Lest Beauty's Lord should come whilst you are unaware.'
I sang from out the sunset, in the trees
I whispered as a spiritual wind,
The many-coloured music of the seas
I made the meet expression of my mind.
Yet in all these
Those who had skill to see
My changeful features, hear my gentle laughter,

Would not discern the One who followed after
And touched my vision to Eternity.

" So, since I would not steal
The heritage of him I heralded,
Straightway I fled
The homely brake within
And hid my face and hushed my faery mirth :
Thence do I peep,
And watch mankind go walking in its sleep
About the bit of heaven it calls the earth.
Through the deep lanes
All feathery with the fragrant herbs that bless,
And pungent herbs that heal
Your little human pains,
They hunt, but never win,
Some final ordered dream of dreariness !

" Yet now and then
From out the ceaseless stream of sightless men
Comes one, wide-eyed,
And knowing to confess
In little things my sacred loveliness.
Then to his side
I leap from out my lair : I am his destined bride !
And quick and wild,
As a vehement child,
Enticed whilst still unsought, I give my charms,
Nothing reserving, to my lover's arms.

"And so it is,"
Says Heavenly Beauty in her darling's ear,
"That those who dwell with me shall never fear
Death's cold corroding touch ;
Nor shall they miss
In life's extremity to find me near.
Nay, more ; for such
As dare look deep
Within my fontal and mysterious eyes, I keep
The secret of another life than this."

CLOUDS

Why should the angels list our tiny life ?
The drama of the cloud is theirs to know :
Great loves and hates, much pageantry of strife,
Vocations various as the winds that blow.
Swift savage living things with streaming hair,
Maternal presences that slowly move
On the curved meadows of the upper air
Where freckled flocks athwart the pastures rove :
Ceaseless they come and go,
The travail of the Spirit to declare.
That which to us is cloud, perchance may be
The massy landscape of Reality.

I think the angels lean from out their land
As children round some pool upon the shore,
That with a rapt and glad amazement pore
Upon the many-coloured magic deep ;
Nor guess the myriad wonders of its floor
Because beneath the bannered weed they creep.
So looking, they behold
Our little patch of ribbed and pebbled sand
All set about with silver, fold on fold ;
And hardly seen
The jungle-life of branching cloud between
Which fills the middle-ocean floating free.

Upon its tide
Those great unfettered populations ride ;
Theirs is the glory of the world, and we
Are but the creeping things deep drowned beneath
that sea.

So, upward gazing to the epic sky,
Perhaps we meet the angels' brooding look :
And we and they within it may descry
Some mutual book
Wherein they read
The long liturgic office of the earth,
As we upon the other page may find—
Meet for our lesser skill—
In the diurnal language of mankind,
A Gospel and a Creed.
News of the Will
That gave us birth,
A Gloria for our mirth,
And an ensample how we may ordain
The strange and stormy pageant of our pain ;
That beauty's solemn mood
Attend the dreadful breaking of the flood,
And grace, as rain,
Fall from that sacrament to help the arid plain.

UXBRIDGE ROAD

The Western Road goes streaming out to seek the cleanly wild,
It pours the city's dim desires towards the undefiled,
It sweeps betwixt the huddled homes about its eddies grown
To smear the little space between the city and the sown :
The torments of that seething tide who is there that can see ?
There's one who walked with starry feet the western road by me !

He is the Drover of the soul ; he leads the flock of men
All wistful on that weary track, and brings them back again.
The dreaming few, the slaving crew, the motley caste of life—
The wastrel and artificer, the harlot and the wife—
They may not rest, for ever pressed by one they cannot see :
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me.

He drives them east, he drives them west, between
the dark and light ;
He pastures them in city pens, he leads them home
at night.
The towery trams, the threaded trains, like shuttles
to and fro
To weave the web of working days in ceaseless
travel go.
How harsh the woof, how long the weft ! who shall
the fabric see ?
The one who walked with starry feet the western
road by me !

Throughout the living joyful year at lifeless tasks
to strive,
And scarcely at the end to save gentility alive ;
The villa plot to sow and reap, to act the villa
lie,
Beset by villa fears to live, midst villa dreams
to die ;
Ah, who can know the dreary woe ? and who the
splendour see ?
The one who walked with starry feet the western
road by me.

Behold ! he lent me as we went the vision of the
seer ;
Behold ! I saw the life of men, the life of God
shine clear.

I saw the hidden Spirit's thrust; I saw the race fulfil
The spiral of its steep ascent, predestined of the Will.
Yet not unled, but shepherded by one they may not see—
The one who walked with starry feet the western road by me!

SUPERSENSUAL

When first the busy, clumsy tongue is stilled,
Save that some childish, stammering words of love
The coming birth of man's true language prove :
When, one and all,
The wistful, seeking senses are fulfilled
With strange, austere delight :
When eye and ear
Are inward turned to meet the flooding light,
The cadence of thy coming quick to hear :
When on thy mystic flight,
Thou Swift yet Changeless, herald breezes bring
To scent the heart's swept cell
With incense from the thurible of spring,
The fragrance which the lily seeks in vain :
When touch no more may tell
The verities of contact unexpressed,
And, deeplier pressed,
To that surrender which is holiest pain,
We taste thy very rest—
Ah, then we find,
Folded about by kindly-nurturing night,
Instinct with silence sweetly musical,
The rapt communion of the mind with Mind.
Then may the senses fall

Vanquished indeed, nor dread
That this their dear defeat be counted sin :
 For every door of flesh shall lift its head,
Because the King of Life is entered in.

STIGMATA

Must I be wounded in the untiring feet
That hasted all the way
My Dear to greet ?
Shall errant love endure this hard delay,
Limping and slow
On its ascents to go ?

Yea, this must be
If thou would'st come with Me:
Thus only can
My seal be set on man.

Must I be wounded in the busy hands
That labour to fulfil
Industrious love's demands
Within the circle of thy sovereign will ?
And can it fall within that will to let
Thy child from all repayment of its debt ?

Yea, this must be,
If thou would'st work for Me:
Thus only can
My seal be set on man.

And is it thus ? then gladly I go lame,
Bring nought within my hands save this thy sign :
See, I exult ! all bliss is in the flame
That mars, yet brands me thine.
Thine are my members : strike again and give
A deeper, sweeter hurt, that dying I may live.

Yea, this must be
Since I would live to thee :
Thus only can
Thy seal be set on man.

Make thou thy blazon perfect ; let my heart
The piercing wound of thy swift love receive,
That only cunning lance which hath the art
Man's sickness to relieve.
Make the place deep and wide,
That thou may'st find a nook, therein to hide :

For this must be,
And thou shalt dwell in me.
Thus only can
Thy seal be set on man.

ENGLISH EASTER : 7 A.M.

The solemn fields breathe out to me
A homely magic and austere :
The wonder and the sanctity
Of shrouded life, is here.

On such a morning grey and still
I think it was, that Mary went
By such a path below the hill,
On love's last errand bent.

She saw the coppice rosy-brown,
She saw the catkin on the bough,
And Calvary as yonder down
That stands above the plough.

Sweet in the sleepy morn it stood,
White on its slopes the cropping sheep ;
Dark in its folds the little wood
Where Life was laid to sleep.

Oh, sought she there, as I, in vain
Place for her tears, her heaviness :
To find, where Perfect Love was lain,
Upspringing loveliness ?

And had he touched to sudden bloom
The platted blackthorn at the door ?
Enveiled with budding life his tomb,
Made violet-blue the floor ?

Did Mary stand, as I to-day,
Encompassed by that life new-born ;
And see his sigil on the spray,
His sign amidst the thorn ?

And know the cruel winter done,
And know the spring was come indeed—
Soft-stepping in the wake of One
Whose feet were on the mead ?

Oh, shining buds upon the pine !
Oh, pulsing sap within the tree !
Behold the endless clue is mine
Which leads where I would be.

REGNUM CAELORUM VIM PATITUR

When our five-angled spears, that pierced the world
And drew its life-blood, faint before the wall
Which hems its secret splendour—when we fall,
Lance broken, banner furled,
Before that calm invincible defence
Whereon our folly hurled
The piteous armies of intelligence—
Then, often-times, we know
How conquering mercy to the battle field
Comes through the darkness, freely to bestow
The prize for which we fought
Not knowing what we sought,
And salve the wounds of those who would not yield.

He loves the valiant foe ; he comes not out to meet
The craven soul made captive of its fear :
Not these the victories that to him are sweet !
But the impetuous soldiery of truth,
And knighthood of the intellectual quest,
Who ask not for his ruth
Nor would desire his rest :
These are to him most dear,
And shall in their surrender yet prevail.
Yea ! at the end of unrewarded days,

By swift and secret ways
As on a sudden moonbeam shining clear,
Soft through the night shall slide upon their gaze
The thrice-defended vision of the Grail :
And when his peace hath triumphed, these shall be
The flower of his celestial chivalry.

And did you think, he saith
As to and fro he goes the trenches through,
My heart impregnable, that you must bring
The ballisters of faith
Their burning bolts to fling,
And all the cunning intricate device
Of human wit,
One little breach to make
That so you might attain to enter it ?
Nay, on the other side
Love's undefended postern is set wide :
But thus it is I woo
My dearest sons, that an ignoble ease
Shall never please,
Nor any smooth and open way entice.
Armed would I have them come
Against the mighty bastions of their home ;
Out of high failure win
Their way within,
And from my conquering hand their birthright take.

MISSA CANTATA

Once in an Abbey-church, the whiles we prayed
All silent at the lifting of the Host,
A little bird through some high window strayed ;
And to and fro
Like a wee angel lost
That on a sudden finds its heaven below,
It went the morning long,
And made our Eucharist more glad with song.

It sang, it sang ! and as the quiet priest
Far off about the lighted altar moved,
The awful substance of the mystic feast
All hushed before,
It, like a thing that loved
Yet loved in liberty, would plunge and soar
Beneath the vault in play
And thence toss down the oblation of its lay.

The walls that went our sanctuary around
Did, as of old, to that sweet summons yield.
New scents and sounds within our gates were found;
The cry of kine,
The fragrance of the field,
All woodland whispers, hastened to the shrine :
The country side was come
Eager and joyful, to its spirit's home.

Far-stretched I saw the cornfield and the plough,
The scudding cloud, the cleanly-running brook,
The humble, kindly turf, the tossing bough
That all their light
From Love's own furnace took—
This altar, where one angel brownly bright
Proclaimed the sylvan creed,
And sang the Benedictus of the mead.

All earth was lifted to communion then,
All lovely life was there to meet its King ;
Ah, not the little arid souls of men
But sun and wind
And all desirous thing
The ground of their beseeching here did find ;
All with one self-same bread,
And all by one eternal priest, were fed.

TWO CAROLS

I

Flores apparuerunt in terra nostra

VERY still was all the land,
Very secret was the hour ;
Darkness as a guard did stand
When the Rose brought forth her flower—
Rosa sine spina.

Long the road and hard the pain,
Chill and lowly was the shed :
See, upon the straw she's lain—
Straw, to make her childing-bed !
Virgo et regina.

Cold the welcome, sharp the smart ;
Godhead treads the bitter way.
Only in the lowly heart
Is her Babe brought forth to-day—
Genetrix divina.

II

Omnis creatura ingemiscit, et parturit usque adhuc.

Silence and darkness! land and sea
Await the ending of their pain.
Qui est in coelis now shall be
One with the world he made again.
Dominus tecum!
So the angels say,
So may it be alway!

Poor Earth, that hast in exile long
Borne alien gods, thy travail cease!
Lift up, lift up, the mother's song:
Rex natus est, his name is Peace.
Dominus tecum!
So the angels say,
So may it be alway!

Adveniat regnum! in the heart
Love's childing-bed is made to-night.
There is he born that heals thy smart,
Emmanuel, the Light of Light!
Dominus tecum!
So the angels say,
So may it be alway!

THE LIBERATED HOSTS

As clouds sweep over the moon,
The hosts of the dead pass by:
They veil the terrible face,
The inviolate face, of the sky.
They fill the winds of the world
With the sound of their gentle breath;
They temper the glitter of life
By the merciful shadow of death.

How should we bear our life
Without the friendship of the happy dead?
The many-meshed deceit
Of sense, heart's cold and heat,
The feverish strife,
By which encompassèd
We grope our way
Toward the peopled splendours of their day?

They see
The steadfast purpose of eternity.
Their care is all for us; they whisper low
Of the great heritage
To which we go.
As one may tell a child of tender age

Of manhood and its joys,
They from our toys
Call us to contemplation of the light.
We, all unknowing, wage
Our endless fight
By ghostly banners led,
By arms invisible helped in the strife.
Without the friendship of the happy dead
How should we bear our life ?

THE IDOL

I DREAMED I was an Idol, still and grave ;
Too cold to comfort, and too weak to save.
Sad angels watched me, and before my face
One kneeling worshipper implored my grace.

No gift he asked, no favour did entreat
But this—to live for ever at my feet ;
There, rapt in selfless ecstasy, to raise
Anthems of longing, litanies of praise.

So I sat dreaming, whilst through endless years
His psalm and his devotion reached my ears ;
And grieving angels cried unceasingly
" He, who so worships, should the Idol be."

THE MANY-EYED AND MANY-WINGED

"The many-eyed and many-winged hosts, named in the Hebrew tongue Cherubim and Seraphim . . . the appellation of Seraphim plainly teaches their ever moving about things divine; their constancy, warmth, keenness, and the seething of that persistent, indomitable, inflexible motion . . . But the appellation of the Cherubim denotes their knowledge and their vision of God."—Dionysius the Areopagite.

The burning seraphs, of created things
Most near to thee;
These are all wings.
They cannot see
Thy face, so close they are to thy Divinity.
They soar within thy light,
Plunge through the rushing river of thy grace;
To them it is a night
Fulfilled of ecstasy,
Where loved and lover meet in love's embrace.

Far off beyond that zone of moving fire,
The steadfast cherubim
All-wise
Thy Being hymn,
Thy neighbourhood eternally desire.
Their anguished eyes

Are ever fixed on thy Reality.
Yet there they may not be :
They cannot rise,
Love hath not made them free.

Thy heart they know, that dread and deep abyss.
Thy heart they know ! Yet cannot come more near.
The torment of the seer
Is theirs, that all shall see and all must miss.
In vain
Their sweeping vision of supernal things ;
'Tis but a deeper pain,
Since the One Truth they teach,
They may not reach—
They have no wings !

Ah, can it be
That here, all grief above,
Is still played out earth's bitterest tragedy ?
Must those who clearest see
Thy beauty, linger in this twilight dim ?
Dear God, who well dost love
All men and angels, of thy charity,
Pluck from thy mercy's breast
Feathers of love, so thy poor cherubim
Take wing, and fly to thee and be at rest !

HEAVEN OR HELL

" . . . Ubi nos omnes unus amoris ignis sumus, qui major est, quam quæcunque unquam condita sunt a Deo."—*Ruysbroeck.*

Let me whilst yet I can,
In this life's span,
Stretch to the Only Fair,
And teach my homing heart to breathe its native air.
Let me, whilst yet I may,
Learn to endure
Love's living flame most pure ;
Its anguish that is joy,
Its piercing light
That must destroy
My night,
And merge my moment in the Eternal Day.

In no celestial place,
Of no seraphic race,
Shall I acquire that art of blessedness ;
But of my playmates in life's littleness,
My comrades in life's care.
Ah ! let me not from that long schooling turn :

Lest when I wake,
Death's heritage of mystery to take,
My dimmed and frosted spirit may not bear
Upon that Hearth to burn,
Within that Light to dwell,
And so God's flaming heart become my Hell.

THEOPHANY

Deep-cradled in the fringèd mow to lie
And feel the rhythmic flux of life sweep by,
This is to know the easy heaven that waits
Before our timidly-embattled gates :
To share the exultant leap and thrust of things
Outward toward perfection, in the heart
Of every bud to see the folded wings,
Discern the patient Whole in every part.

ANCONA

I WONDER where the rapt Madonnas are
Who walked the Italy of long ago ?
Set in some far
Cloud-country where the torch of Time burns slow,
And angel-boys play low
On psaltery and cithern all the day ;
Where radiant blossoms grow
As dream-flowers may—
There do they dwell,
Serene ensamplers of high motherhood,
And find it good
In children's eyes to gaze and there to spell
Histories of silence and of fortitude,
And lyric peace, which is Beatitude.

PASSION-TIDE WEATHER

Uponne a harshe and leaflesse Tree
The flowrie woods amonge
I saw a Kinge y-crowned with thorne
That there in sorrowe honge.
I felte a sharpe and bitere winde
That in the braunches blewe ;
Full sore it smote hys tendere limbes,
And did hys paynes renewe.

I sayd : "What menes this bitere winde ?"
A voyce to me replyed
"It is the brethe of wicked menne
That mocked hym when he deyed."

And whiles I watched, from oute the deepe
A murkie cloude drewe nighe ;
It hidde the fayre and yellowe sonne,
It coverede alle the skie.
Then cryed the Kinge in anguish sore,
For now the Lyghte was gone ;
And he, that reyned so royalie,
Was left to deye alone.

"Oh whence," I sayd, "this darkling cloude ?"
A voyce to me replyed
"It is the blacke of manne hys sinne,
For dole of wich he deyed."

But sudene from the murkie cloude
A showere of rayne ran downe ;
It sette a jeweled coronall
About the thornës crowne ;
It fele upon hys parchèd lips,
It esed hys bitere payne,
And now upon that woefulle Tree
The sonne shone oute againe.

"How blest," I sayd, "this heling rayne!"
A voyce to me replyed
"It is thy teres of penitence
That helped hym when he deyed."

QUAM DILECTA TABERNACULA TUA.

Without my coppice stood
The solemn angels of the mead and wood.
Across the long, low fields their whispered musing came
Straight to the heart. Beneath their patient feet,
Green fire a burning barrier did make
About the brake,
Save where a narrow wicket pierced the fencing flame :
There one stood sentinel, his friends to greet
With lips and brow that blessed, but Paradise
Held by the Spirit's sword from all unloving eyes.

That seething world of leaf and wing within
High heaven I found,
And all its hierarchies, that here did spin
A mesh of wonder the One Truth around.
As the Nigella her celestial flowers
Net-wise enveils, these by some faery art
Life's dearest mystery kept.
Though airy Principalities and Powers
Through every treey turret singing swept
With music of much joy,
Though Virtues and Dominions did deploy

Wisdom and courage, from the questing heart
Beauty hid beauty ; weaving of all thing
The seamless vesture of its secret King.

More urgently I pressed
My wood within, its shrouded soul to find.
Before my footsteps went
Hurry of forest folk ; upon the wind
I heard the introit of the birds : " We know—
We know—we know that he is here ! " they cried.
Thus did the ardent gaze
Of many eyes, upon one thicket bent,
Draw me within the maze
Of plaited bramble, as the hidden nest
Draws the lost fledgling : there, full low and meek,
I found the altar of that worship dressed,
All humbly on the ground. 'Twas but a weed
Most piteous, small, and weak,
Wilted and vanquished by the flooding tide
Of riotous growth ; that wounded yet did seek
To save from death its slow-maturing seed,
Heir of its garnered loveliness, that so
From its self-giving life another life might flow.

Not on the tree
Of knowledge, for invention of the wise,
But in that broken cup of sacrifice
There shone the primal light of Deity.
As once on Mary's head,
Now on those faded petals there was shed

Fulness of grace : the radiant seraphim
Hung hushed and still about that blossom's brim.
Here Gabriel cried " All Hail ! "
And here Veronica held out her veil :
Here Bethlehem was met with Calvary.

THE LADY POVERTY

I MET her on the Umbrian hills :
 Her hair unbound, her feet unshod.
As one whom secret glory fills
 She walked, alone with God.

I met her in the city street :
 Oh, changèd was her aspect then !
With heavy eyes and weary feet
 She walked alone, with men.

VENUS AND ANOTHER

Foam-set Venus cried,
"I bring joy, God-given ;
Joy of life ! On the tide
That swings man to his fate, there I ride :
Mine the whip and the spur,
By me all are driven.
Bird in the nest,
Child at the breast,
Swift foot and soft fur,
Rich wheat, fruiting vine,—
All are mine!"

A Voice from the gloom
Came solemn and low,
"See, Mother of Loves, the doom
Whither must go
All things alive
That your lash doth drive.
Not the suck of your wave,
Not the fire of your breath,
Shall be potent to save
Your slaves when they come
To the foreshore of Death.

"Will you be at their side
In that hour of their woe,
Mother and Bride?"
"Nay, I in the deep
Over all things that flow
My empery keep.
Alone they must go
Whom I loose from my hand;
To the love-driven main
My strong ebb from that strand
Shall bear me again."

Said the Voice, "I will stand
Your jetsam to meet
At the life-fretted shore.
I, that went on before,
That trod your wild billows and won to the land—
I, Fore-runner and Friend,
I, Beginning and End—
I wait for the wreckage tost up to my feet
Of your slaves, who have striven.
I bring peace to their passion, delight for defeat:
Death's delight, which is Light, God-given."

INVITATORY

Come ! break thy fast,
Dear Heart, poor wearied one !
Long is the desert way thou hast to tread
Ere all be done,
The House of the Beloved attained at last.
See, here is angels' bread,
An earnest of that grace
My Bride shall have when this lorn way is trod,
And she beholds my face,
Her Lover and her God.

" Ashes thou art, to ashes shalt return,"
I said in anger. Thou didst answer, " Yea !
Yet in these ashes still a fire doth burn
That shall outlive the clay
And drives me hence,
Purged by the ritual of penitence,
To wander lonely." " Nay,"
I said, " Not all the way
In solitude, for I will surely come,—
I, with my wounded feet,—
Far into this world's wilderness to meet
My Sister and my Bride ;
That we may go together, side by side,
To the desired threshold of our home.

There, even upon the brink
Of our transcendent nuptials, thou shalt drink
Deep from the honied chalice of my pain.
Then shall I cry, 'Come! Bride and Pilgrim, rest,
Thy head upon Love's breast,
Where long thy griefs have lain,
—Dear child, poor wearied one!—
For Earth's long Lent is done;
The Easter of thy soul hath dawned at last.
Come! at Love's mystic table break thy fast.'"

THE BACKWARD GLANCE

They set him on a sunny road,
His face toward the world's expanse :
"Yonder," they said, "the victor's crown ;
Beware the backward glance."

"Run swift, run true, the crown is thine ! "
Unhindered through the crescent hours
He ran a fair and level road
That went between the flowers.

But when he left the valley path
And up the hill began to climb,
He heard the sound of distant feet
That with his own kept time.

He closed his ears, he steeled his heart,
Yet still that sound came down the wind ;
He turned, and saw a dreadful form
That followed far behind.

Then forward on his way he sprang,
Scaling the hill with shortening breath ;
But ever on his ears there rang
The pattering feet of Death.

At noon upon a lonely height
He stood, and saw the road run down
A shining ribbon of desire
Straight to the promised crown.

"Lord of my life am I!" he cried,
"The crown is mine." But as the hope
Flamed in his breast, he looked behind:
Death's feet were on the slope.

Then down the steep and sudden path
Swift to the goal he took his flight.
Far down the hill, he looked again—
Death stood upon the height.

On, on he sped, until the crown
Against the glowing sunset shone:
Yet ever at the backward glance
The following form drew on.

Fast through the gathering dusk he flew:
He leapt, the guerdon to embrace.
But as he leapt, he looked behind—
Death looked him in the face.

MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH DONOR

Melior est dies una in atriis tuis super millia.

THERE is great stillness in the court of heaven,
Great stillness at the centre of our life.
Upon its outer edge the ceaseless strife,
The turbulence
Of making, breaking, bubble-worlds of sense
Proclaims the steadfast working of God's leaven :

Yet deep within its heart a calm there is,
Fontal creative calm, whence comes the whole.
Thither can man retrace
His outset path, to find within that place
Maternal Life enthroned, and on her knees
The Son of God, the soul.

Long years ago in Bruges, I found the way
That led me to this loggia of the mind ;
Therein to kneel and pray,
Therein all riches and all joy to find
Before that Lady's feet,
Enclosèd in her benediction sweet.

Men held me rich, a master in my trade,
Yet strangely cold
For that no fragile toys to my delight

I got against my gold ;
Nor any earth-nest made
Of costly stuffs and bright.

They said, "Poor fool ! he knows not but to live
Close to his ledgers, at his ledgers die ;
And thinks to prosper by love's forfeiture."
They mocked, and snatched their little joys ; but I,
Enwrapped in all that life and love can give,
Within my Home and Vision dwelt secure.

I did not know the moment they call death,
So was its dark by that effulgence lit ;
I was not there
When my laborious body ceased its breath,
Nor did some dreadful messenger declare,
"Thou art departed evermore from it."

Here was I set, here was my passion held
Upon the peaceful pivot of all time ;
Before a secret beauty that excelled
All imaged splendours tender and sublime
My poise was fixed,
The teeming aisles of life and death betwixt.

Beneath my feet the restless planets run,
By urgent spirits swept
About the bright arena of the sun.
I hear the invitation of their wings :
Yet have I kept
My steadfast worship at the heart of things.

I stir not for the hastening earth. It hath
Five hundred times retrod
The wide and weary cycle of its path ;
From seed to sere
Played out the painful pageant of its year—
But I have lived a moment with my God.

AN ARTIST LAY DYING

I LIE and watch, where the April sun
 Has kissed the hills into ecstasy :
I watch, and you say that my day is done,
 That the spring no more shall be born for me.
 But I cannot die whilst the skies are blue,
 Whilst the lark sings high !
 Too few were my springs—too few ! too few !
 I *cannot* die.

Ah, take me back to the city gate
 Where the skies are grey and the street runs dim :
Let me learn the need, ere it grows too late,
 Of a straight road back to him.
 Small need to turn whilst the world burns bright
 To a God on high :
 But there, where misery veils the light,
 There, I can die !

OLIVE SONG

Oh, the olives gleam in Umbria when the spring is near to birth—
(Oh, the olives gleam in Umbria in the spring)
And they make a silver mantle for the brown and busy earth,
(Oh, the olives gleam in Umbria in the spring).

They toss their restless fingers to the splendours of the sky
And the shadow of its glory earthward fling ;
A broken bit of heaven for the weary passer-by.
(Oh, the olives gleam in Umbria in the spring.)

PLANTING-TIME

To paint the earth with tulips is a joy,
It is the satisfaction of desire ;
'Tis to employ
God's own creative touch
And from the smouldering world to strike a coloured fire.

Behold how much
Within my hand I hold !
A bulb, brown and tight,
Leaf lapped, fold on fold,
As if from prying sight
And winter's cold
To keep the sacred spark of the Eternal Light.

God dreams in plants, they say.
Ah, would that I might creep
Within the magic circle of his winter sleep :
Go, as the bulbs, with him
Into the dim,
There well content
To pitch my tent
And mark
Rapt from all other thing
The flowery fancies that elamp his dark.

There Life, who cast away
Her crumpled summer dress,
Sets on the loom
The warp-threads of another loveliness
And weaves a mesh of beauty for the Spring.
She is apprentice of Reality,
And the divine imagination broods
Above her busy shuttles as they fly.
Within that narrow room
Dwell these disparate partners side by side,
In undivided act of artistry.
Yea, in the sod
Life hath laid hold on God :
And Joy above the wintry flower plot sings
Because Eternal Truth into poor Time she brings.

Here, in this garden bed,
Surely the Spirit and the Bride
Are wed :
And of their mutual and mysterious moods
When the long months are run
New crescent life shall leap,
Fierce from the deep,
To meet the vernal Sun.

First the sharp leaves thrust through ;
Sea-blue,
Tight-furled,
As if about some private treasure curled.
Then, hard to see
But dear to guess,

The timid promise of maturity—
So proudly meek !—
Comes whispering at the casement of the heart :
Calls us to part
Those curtained leaves, and seek
The harbinger of coming fruitfulness.
And lo ! within each strong and sheltering blade
A baby poem, new-made.

TEN-TONNER SONG

Dancing down the Channel 'long the summer day,
Dancing down the Channel with the breeze ;
Dwelling in a dreamland built of sun and spray
Dancing down the Channel with the breeze.
Peace upon the crosstrees, Hope upon the prow,
Love to be our pilot through the seas,
Need we ask for heaven, we who have it now,
Dancing down the Channel with the breeze ?

Sweet to lie in harbour 'long the summer night,
Sweet to lie in harbour when it's still :
List the lapping waters, watch the flashing light :
Sweet to lie in harbour when it's still.
Whisper in the moonbeams, whiles the luggers creep
Slowly to the shelter of the hill ;
Days of happy roaming bring the night for sleep,
Sweet to lie in harbour when it's still.

THE BELOVED COUNTRY

WHERE towered towns on cypress heights
The wandering roads command,
And bosom-deep in fragrant fields
The lilied virgins stand,—
The Lady Mary walks abroad
In that enchanted land.

Where convent cell and pilgrim path
The mystic quest proclaim,
And olive-grove and vineyard feed
The Chalice and the Flame,
The faithful dead behold the light
That veils the Fourfold Name.

And altars to the Rose of Heaven
Are set beside the way,
And Angelus and Vesper bell
Mark out the labouring day.
There, in the cool and silent hours,
The angels come to pray.

Ah ! there, I think, the little fauns
That in the woodlands lie
Sing anthems with the saints of God,
His works to glorify :
For where his beauty comes to birth,
His Love doth sanctify !

LA CATHEDRALE ENGLOUTIE

(After Debussy)

I

In trust and travail through the lengthening years
The arid rock upon
I have laid stone by stone ;
Through sweat and tears
Seen the slow walls rise high,
Climb past my scaffolding towards the sky.

Yet not alone,
But as a master-builder did I strive
Within my craft to bind
All things alive.
The fretful, tender chisels of the wind,
The hard harmonic hammers of the storm—
All, all would I conform
To my supreme intent :
I said to every secret of the mind,
"Be thou my instrument."

"Great distant dreams, my soaring towers enfold !
Wild wistful flowers, your magic here employ !
Come, laughing thoughts, and wreathe my door with joy :

Come, solemn powers, my arches to uphold !
Let the wise buttress be
Well founded in good earth, that it may keep
The airy vault of my high fantasy :
There on the steep
Great gallery my open porch above,
Kings of pure vision, guard
The gateway of my love.
Here at the window peep,
Ye fauns and fairies of the wood and hill :
Shall your amazed regard
On that still shrine of utter loveliness
Be held an ill ?
No, rather shall you bring
Treasure and fragrance from the forest store,
And your discovered King
With other kings adore :
His empery of your demesne confess."

So all the flickering fire
Of man's supreme desire
Crested each gable's edge
Of my Cathedral ; it was fretted o'er
In every nook and ledge
With all the sorcery of sea and shore.
Men gaze and find it fair,
Yet shall I care
Though these with wonder con
The patterned thoughts thereon ?

Not here my joy, but where
Far off the deep dim sanctuary within
I may my love's most secret home prepare.
No other guerdon would the builder win
So Light and Life upon his altar brood,
And call it good.

II

The all-desirous flood,
The creeping, cruel, and resistless sea,
Hath very treacherously
My slow-built vision slain.
Methought it stood
Crag-set above the main,
Safe from the lust,
The aimless strife,
The suck and swirl of never-resting life :
Yet lo ! he hath betrayed his builder's trust.

Deep was the passion, holy was the pain
Which did that dreamy loveliness perfect ;
Yet both were vain,
For all is wrecked.
And I, its maker, must endure to know
How that the lewd and curious monsters go
Freely about my heavenward-marching aisles :
How the sea-ooze defiles
The secret place where Perfect Love has lain,
And with its creeping stain
My chiselled adoration does bedim.
No more shall my exultant seraphim
Stretch to the sunny air,
And call the passing birds their antiphon to share ;
My solemn swinging bell

No more may tell
The coming of the Bridegroom to the Bride,
But the resistless sway
And mournful changes of the uneasy tide
Must patiently obey ;
Yea, like a prisoner joyful in his bonds,
Ave and Sanctus to the surge responds.

Shall I complain
In this my bitter fate ?
Cry out against the smart ?
I, that have dared create
An altar of God's pain
And in the mason's mystery imitate
The secret process of his cosmic art ?
In that most utter sacrifice
Which all its hoarded loveliness would spend
Is found his dear device
The conquests of the spirit to extend.
To this bleak altar, then, I bring my gift
Where he hath been before ;
And my oblation, that I dreamed to lift
Priest-like to heaven
The Everlasting Beauty to adore,
I give that it may leaven
The deep corruption of the ocean floor.

What though it seem
That this, my towering dream,
Hath never stood

High-set above the foam-emplaited flood ?
This be the builder's pride,
That his defeat has bought—
As once the greater loss of Calvary—
The benediction of the unhouselled sea.
Not vainly hath he wrought
To whom the Master Builder might confide
The heavenly task of failure, thus to hide
Within that rebel heart the saving Rood.

High, homeward-turning thought
That spire-like from the slime
Of teeming life would climb
And tireless sought
The clear-cold spaces of the unsullied stars,
Lo ! in the scars
Of this your overthrow
See, saith his Voice, and know
The brand divine
By which I mark those builders who are Mine ;
Who striving fall
Beneath the cross-shaped load pontifical,
And give, as once I gave,
The child of their desire, life's hideous deeps to save.

VESTMENTS

In Lent the church puts on her royal dress
Of violet,
As if she would confess
How fragrant is humility, how great
The power of that imperial estate
Of penitence.
In this her abject hour is on her set
The purple of her Lord's magnificence.

But when the sudden drama of her joy
She plays,
That kingly robe she needs not to employ :
Since he is at her side,
And she—Child, Sister, Bride !—
White-frocked may run
All merry to his praise
And sing her Gaudeamus in the sun.

At Tomb and Manger well may she rejoice
Because new life she hath :
Yet there's a voice
That cries " The heavenly seed
Upon whose mystic fruit the soul shall feed
In blood is planted, and with blood embued.
Red as a wound the piercing Spirit's path ;
By death is life renewed."

Because the Life of God
Hath fed the Tree,
Behold! the running sap in Jesse's rod;
And every quickened branch and twig receives
The garlanded delight of budding leaves.
All verdant now her dress until he come—
Until she see
His advent and her home.

Fourfold within her heart the living Flame,
Fourfold about her flows
The mighty river that from Eden came.
Safe in her shade the timid wheat upsprings,
Green on her bough the helpless tendril clings:
But purple is the fruit upon her vine,
White shines the Bread of Angels, as a rose
Red is her wine.

THE DARK NIGHT

Long time I fought to win the firm assurance,
Long time I sought the Land from which I come.
Lonely I looked for One Alone sufficing ;
Now I am lost, and very far from home !

Once I could stretch toward thy secret splendour,
Once through the quiet I knew a message came :
Now I am old—yea, old and very weary,
Cold is thy hearth, and spectral seems the Flame !

Once it was light with me, now shadows gather
Swift to my sight : too long the soul's reprieve.
God of my dreams, have pity on the dreamer ;
And kill me quickly, whilst I yet believe !

ICHTHUS

THREATENING the sky,
Foreign and wild the sea,
Yet all the fleet of fishers are afloat ;
They lie
Sails furled
Each frail and tossing boat,
And cast their little nets into an unknown world.
The countless, darting splendours that they miss,
The rare and vital magic of the main,
The which for all their care
They never shall ensnare—
All this
Perchance in dreams they know ;
Yet are content
And count the night well spent
If so
The indrawn net contain
The matter of their daily nourishment.

The unseizable sea,
The circumambient grace of Deity,
Where live and move
Unnumbered presences of power and love,
Slips through our finest net :
We draw it up all wet,

A-shimmer with the dew-drops of that deep.
And yet
For all their toil the fishers may not keep
The instant living freshness of the wave ;
Its passing benediction cannot give
The mystic meat they crave
That they may live.

But on some stormy night
We, venturing far from home,
And casting our poor trammel to the tide,
Perhaps shall feel it come
Back to the vessel's side,
So easy and so light
A child might lift,
Yet hiding in its mesh the one desirèd gift ;
That living food
Which man for ever seeks to snatch from out the flood.

ST. CATHERINE OF GENOA

MYSTIC AND PHILANTHROPIST

Say, did you go,
Great soul and sweet,
When first his message reached your weary heart,
Far in the wilderness your Love to greet
From all mean things apart ?
Not so :
But down the alleys that his footsteps trod
Between the blind, the ailing, and the lame,
Steadfast in ministry you came—
Yet swift to the encounter of your God.

The hideous bed
Of utmost poverty,
The chamber of the dead,
The busy hospital ; all these did see
How that you ran, bright-faced, from ecstasy
Life's dreadful wrecks to tend,
And, for his sake, in each acclaimed a friend.

Ah ! was it these, your well-belovèd guests,
Who taught you eager pain's most stern delight,
High heaven's most dear behests ?
Did you surprise

Within their fevered eyes the sudden gleam
Of Paradise ?
Or watching through the night
The adept of a mighty agony,
Discern as in a dream
Behind his anguished sighs,
The murmurous olives of Gethsemane ?

Novice of Love, you were initiate
By helpless hands in his divine intent ;
Yea, were communicate
In Life's most pure and piteous sacrament.
Remedial mercy's art
That, cruel-kind,
Would wound to mend
And with deliberate smart
Probe the deep ulcers of the infected mind ;
Or, greatly daring, spend
The very life-blood of the stricken soul—
This did your schooling make you to admire,
This your blessed office teach you to extol.
Thus your translucid sight
Pierced to that purging Fire,
That lazar-house of light,
Where those who greatly love,
Yet know themselves impure,
Plunge in the healing flame, their charity to prove :
That sweet sharp physic joyful to endure,
And from life's sickness work the spirit's cure.

MEMENTO, HOMO

Remember, man, that dust thou art—
Dust, by the spirit stung to life ;
Yea, recollect thyself a part
Of the eternal strife.

Remember whence thy source ; do not
That lowly ancestry forget.
Lo ! great and starry seems thy lot,
Thou art God's partner—yet,

Remember that the brooding earth
Hath found in thee her cherished child :
Honour the womb that gave thee birth,
Thou art not thus defiled.

Remember how thy strength and skill
She tried and tested o'er and o'er,
In many a vanished type, until
Thy perfect form she bore.

Remember those thy kith and kin,
The furred, the scaled, the feathered things ;
Wouldst thou the angels' freedom win ?
Thy brother birds have wings.

Remember thou the green delight
Of wildling forest spreading wide ;—
Each bud declares thy mother's might,
Hast thou no filial pride ?

Remember, then, with healing pain
Thy graceless other-worldly mood ;
Turn to the living earth again,
And thou shalt find her good.

LUX IN TENEBRIS

Dear, could I lay upon your eyes a hand
To heal their dimness and illuminate,
By such a gift as went
Amongst the graces of an earlier state ;
That you might see,
And seeing seek no more to understand,
The secret splendour of Reality—
Could it be thus, I know not if I dare,
Lest it should chance another Hand is there
With love's intent
To shield your untaught vision from the glare.

Who knows ? perhaps 'tis best
For those he most desires
Safe in the dark to dwell,
As her strait cell
Keeps the glad nun close-pressed
Against the shadowed shelter of his breast,
And near its fontal fires :
With eyes, as others think,
Turned from the light
Yet opened wide to drink
The flooding radiance of his mystic night.

Not all who move amongst strange glories know
Which way
Their charmèd feet should go ;
So their bedazzled sight full oft is led astray.
Even of the angels, 'twas the nearest one
Of all
To the celestial throne
That to the deeps did fall—
Yea, and his very name was Lucifer.
On him Eternal Wisdom did confer
Fulness of sight, imperial liberty ;
And lo ! wide-eyed he fell,
Engirt with light, for evermore to dwell
Within the dread lucidity
Of hell.

Perhaps in that descent he may have passed
A shadowy place
Where twilit creatures of another race,
Patient in ignorance
And with veiled face,
Await the revelation of God's glance :
That so at last,
Because his mercy is upon the meek
And these to prove his splendour would not seek,
They may attain to find,
Led of his piercing ray,
A sudden way
From out the weary country of the blind.

Before his countenance
And very near his heart, their angels move
In swift exultant dance :
Those ardent seraphs who, fulfilled of love,
Yet humbly fold
Their wings before their face, lest they behold
The devastating beauty of the Sun.
These ask not for the state
Illuminate
Of cherubim,
With wisdom and with knowledge satiate :
But, wrapped in their own darkness, would take flight
As children homewards run
Into his bright :
There, in that radiance dim,
As iron within the fire, to be made one with him.

So, dear, I dare not with my clumsy touch—
Had I the skill to heal—
Open where he hath closed,
Nor suddenly reveal
Within your dark the shining of his light :
Remembering one, who sat with eyes downcast
Meekly disposed
Nor speaking over much,
And waiting on his pleasure, till at last
The Voice that lovers know
Made musical her night.
He did not speak to bless

The busy throng
His all-compelling presence that confess,
And the day long
In his deliberate service gladly go,
Expert in every ministering art ;
Nor chided her because she might not see
The deeps and heights of that Reality
Which now was come
Into her narrow home,
But said : Let be, she hath the better part.

ON THE FELLS

I THINK the joyful spirits of our dead
Need not to seek another bourne than this :
Seen with the eye of God,
The very earth they trod
Is instrument sufficient of their bliss.

Perhaps some eager souls are outward fled
To ride upon the interstellar wind ;
But some I know there are
Who on a homelier star
Place of refreshment, light and peace do find.

Thou comrade of my quest, half-known, all-dear,
Who walkedst unseen beside me on the fell—
What time about us shone,
In heath and beck and stone,
Hints of a mighty meaning—shall I tell

The secrets of our homeland ? How the clear
And uncreated Light on every sod
There broods with grave desire ?
Yea, how the answering fire,
The altar-flame of beauty, leaps to God ?

Beyond the crusted gables of the town
Still does that vision hold its solemn space ;
As with the hastening train,
So with my flitting brain
The distant fells march at an ordered pace.

No-whence, no-whither shall my life be blown
Far from the faithful hills of our delight ;
Till from that steadfast home
A strange swift breeze shall come,
And thrust their silence through my troubled night.

CORPUS CHRISTI

I

Come, dear Heart !
The fields are white to harvest : come and see
As in a glass the timeless mystery
Of love, whereby we feed
On God, our bread indeed.
Torn by the sickles, see him share the smart
Of travailing Creation : maimed, despised,
Yet by his lovers the more dearly prized
Because for us he lays his beauty down—
Last toll paid by Perfection for our loss !
Trace on these fields his everlasting Cross,
And o'er the stricken sheaves the Immortal Victim's
crown.

II

From far horizons came a Voice that said,
"Lo ! from the hand of Death take thou thy daily
bread."
Then I, awakening, saw
A splendour burning in the heart of things :
The flame of living love which lights the law

Of mystic death that works the mystic birth.
I knew the patient passion of the earth,
Maternal, everlasting, whence there springs
The Bread of Angels and the life of man.

III

Now in each blade
I, blind no longer, see
The glory of God's growth : know it to be
An earnest of the Immemorial Plan.
Yea, I have understood
How all things are one great oblation made :
He on our altars, we on the world's rood.
Even as this corn,
Earth-born,
We are snatched from the sod ;
Reaped, ground to grist,
Crushed and tormented in the Mills of God,
And offered at Life's hands, a living Eucharist.

TRANSCENDENCE

Within thy sheltering darkness spin the spheres ;
Within the shaded hollow of thy wings.
The life of things,
The changeless pivot of the passing years—
These in thy bosom lie.
Restless we seek thy being ; to and fro
Upon our little twisting earth we go :
We cry, " Lo, there ! "
When some new avatar thy glory does declare,
When some new prophet of thy friendship sings,
And in his tracks we run
Like an enchanted child, that hastes to catch the sun.

And shall the soul thereby
Unto the All draw nigh ?
Shall it avail to plumb the mystic deeps
Of flowery beauty, scale the icy steeps
Of perilous thought, thy hidden Face to find,
Or tread the starry paths to the utmost verge of the sky ?

Nay, groping dull and blind
Within the sheltering dimness of thy wings—
Shade that their splendour flings
Athwart Eternity—
We, out of age-long wandering, but come
Back to our Father's heart, where now we are at home.

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